

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-12 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

OIC-04 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /155 W
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R 051520 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1411

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 1869

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ELAB, OCON, TS

SUBJ: UGTT CONGRESS: A TRIUMPH FOR BOURGUIBA AND
ACHOUR

REF: TUNIS 1804

1. SUMMARY. UGTT CONGRESS, FIRST MAJOR NATIONAL CONGRESS
HERE SINCE PSD CONGRESS IN MONASTIR, HELD MARCH 27-30 IN
TUNIS SUBURB. IT RESULTED IN IMPRESSIVE SHOW OF SUPPORT
FOR PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA AND UGTT SEC GEN HABIB ACHOUR.
PM NOUIRA, WHO DID NOT ADDRESS MEETING, GIVEN LESS SUPPORT.
WHILE CONGRESS ATTENDED BY OVER 700 DELEGATES HAD OUTWARD
APPEARANCE OF DEMOCRATIC PROCEEDINGS IN FACT LITTLE REAL
DEMOCRACY EXERCISED. ACHOUR UNANIMOUSLY RE- ELECTED
FOR FIRST TIME BY DELEGATES. UNANIMOUS ELECTION
NORMALLY RESERVED FOR BOURGUIBA. LITTLE OF SIGNIFICANCE
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IN RESOLUTIONS WHICH PUBLISHED IN ADVANCE AND ADOPTED WITH LITTLE CHANGE. NEW EXECUTIVE IS LARGELY HOLDOVER OF PREVIOUS BUREAU WITH CANDIDATES OBVIOUSLY HAND- PICKED BY ACHOUR. WIDE- RANGING AND HIGH LEVEL FOREIGN ATTENDANCE DEMONSTRATES UGTT POSITION OF IMPORTANCE ON INTERNATIONAL SCENE PARTICULARLY IN AFRICAN AND ARAB CIRCLES. BOURGUIBA RECEIVED ACHOUR ON APRIL 4 TO EXPRESS HIS SATISFACTION OVER " DEMOCRATIC" NATURE OF CONGRESS AND MATURITY OF WORKERS. CONTRAST OF UGTT MEETING WITH MONASTIR PSD CONGRESS IS OBVIOUS AND STRIKING IN EVERY SENSE. BOURGUIBA BENEFITS FROM FULL GUTT ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT WHICH ACHOUR DEMONSTRATED HE ABLE DELIVER. REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THIS EXTENDS TO RANK AND FILE, HOWEVER. END SUMMARY.

2. UGTT CONGRESS WAS OPENED MARCH 27 BY PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA' S SPEECH IN WHICH HE LAUDED ACHOUR AND REAFFIRMED RIGHT TO STRIKE EVEN THOUGH LATTER ONLY TO BE USED WHEN ALL OTHER MEASURES EXHAUSTED. OVER 700 DELEGATES HAVE BOURGUIBA STANDING OVATIONS BEFORE AND AFTER SPEECH.

3. MEETINGS WERE ORDERLY, WELL- ORGANIZED WITH ACHOUR PRESIDING THROUGHOUT. MOTIONS, PUBLISHED IN ADVANCE, WERE FAIRLY GENERAL STATEMENTS OF UGTT INTERESTS AND CONCERNS ON POLITICAL WND ECONOMIC ISSUES. POLITICAL RESOLUTION DEVOTED LARGELY TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PARTICULARLY RELATIONS WITH ARAB UNIONS, PALESTINE QUESTION, ICFTU RELATIONS AND SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA. ALSO EXPRESSED ENTIRE SATISFACTION ON " END OF BELLIGERENCE IN FAR EAST" AND CONGRATULATED VIETNAM PEOPLE FOR " HAVING REGAINED LIBERTY AND DIGNITY." ECONOMIC RESOLUTION CONTAINED FEW SPECIFIC DEMANDS BRIEF REFERENCE TO PRICE CONTROL AND NO MENTION OF WAGE DEMANDS.

4. KEY ELEMENT IN ELECTIONS WAS UNANIMOUS RE- ELECTION OF ACHOUR AS SECGEN BY DELEGATES. SECGEN PREVIOUSLY ELECTED BY EXECUTIVE. HERETOFORE, AMONG NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ONLY PSD PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA HAS BEEN ACCORDED UNANIMOUS ELECTION. NEW EXECUTIVE CONTAINS NINE HOLDOVERS FROM PREVIOUS BOARD ELECTED IN MAY 1970 INCLUDING PRESENT MIN OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS FARHAT DACHRAOUI WHO BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SPECIAL MOTION WILL BE PERMITTED RESUME UGTT POST WHEN HE

CEASES FILL GOT FUNCTION. OF FIVE NEW MEMBERS, TWO ARE SECGENS OF UGTT FEDERATIONS, TWO ARE STAFF OFFICIALS, ONE FORMERLY EMPLOYED BY ICFTU, AND ONE IS NOT KNOWN TO HAVE HELD KEY POSITION PREVIOUSLY. INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT 12 ELECTED ALL RECEIVED OVER 400 OF 647 VOTES CAST WHILE FIVE UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES RECEIVED LESS THAN 70 VOTES EACH. NONE OF LATTER ARE WELL KNOWN IN TRADE UNION OR POLITICAL FIELD. INTERLOCKING UGTT- PSD RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES WITH PSD DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND SEC GEN AND ASST SEC GEN TUNIS COORDINATING COMMITTEE REMAINING ON EXECUTIVE.

5. INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION AT CONGRESS FORMIDABLE AND REFLECTION ON UGTT AND ACHOUR' S ROLE ON INTERNATIONAL SCENE. OVER 35 FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED, INCLUDING SOME 20 FROM AFRICA. AMONG TOP OFFICIALS HERE WERE VICTOR FEATHER, SEVGEN, BRITISH TUC; DRAGOMIR PTEROVIC, PRESIDENT YUGOSLAV UNIONS; OTTO KERSTEN, SEC GEN, ICFTU; IRVING BROWN, AALC; AND ABDELLATIF BALTIA, SEC GEN, ICATU. BOURGUIBA RECEIVED KERSTEN AND FEATHER TOGETHER AND PETROVIC SUBSEQUENTLY.

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PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

OIC-04 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /155 W

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SUBJECT: UGTT CONGRESS: A TRIUMPH FOR BOURGUIBA AND ACHOUR

6. ACCORDING ONE PRESS REPORT MARCH 31 UGTT STATUTES AMENDED TO INCLUDE NEW ARTICLE 4 WHICH STATES UGTT " IS AFFILIATED WITH ICFTU, GENERAL UNION OF ARAB WORKERS (UGTA) (SIC) AND ATUC." BELIEVE UGTA REFERS TO ICATU. HOWEVER, THIS AFFILIATION NOT REFLECTED IN POLICAL MOTION PUBLISHED APRIL 1 WHICH SAYS CONGRESS " RECOMMENDS UGTT MULTIPLY AND CONSOLIDATE TIES WHITH ARAB UNIONS AND PARTICULARLY INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARAB WORKERS (SIC) AND ARAB LABOR BUREAU." EMBASSY HOPES CLARIFY WHETHER UGTT NOW AFFILIATED TO ICATU ON RETURN UGTT DELEGATION FROM ADDIS.

7 CONGRESS SENT MESSAGES OF SUPPORT TO BOURGUIBA AND PM NOUIRA. FORMER FULL OF PRAISE AND DEVOTION TO BOURGUIBA AND HIS POLICIES INCLUDING " TOTAL SUPPORT"
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FOR PROPOSALS HE MADE RECENTLY TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CONCERNING CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. MESSAGE TO NOUIRA MADE NO REFERENCE TO PM BUT SUPPORTED POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF GOT.

8. BOURGUIBA RECEIVED ACHOUR APRIL 3 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON CONGRESS PRIOR ACHOUR' S DEPARTURE FOR ADDIS UNITY CONGRESS (REFTEL). IN STATEMENT FOLLOWING MEETING ACHOUR SAID BOURGUIBA HAD INDICATED SATISFACTION WITH " CLIMATE OF DEMOCRACY" DURING CONGRESS AND MATURITY OF WORKERS.

9. COMMENT: WHILE UGTT CONGRESS HAD ALL OUTWARD FORM OF DEMOCRACY IN FACT THERE WAS LITTLE SUBSTANTIVE DEMOCRATIC ACTION. IN FACT, CONGRESS CLOSED ONE DAY EARLY FOR LACK OF DEBATE AND ELECTION SLATE WAS OBVIOUSLY HAND- PICKED BY ACHOUR. LATTER OBVIOUSLY HAS GAINED CONTROL OVER UGTT APPARATUS AT ALL LEVELS BUT HIS SUPPORT AMONG RANK AND FILE STILL SOMEWHAT IN QUESTION. HIS PROMISE TO RENEW PERSONNEL STATUTES BY JUNE 1. OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED AVOID LABOR TROUBLE UNTIL SUMMER MONTHS WHEN IT MORE DIFFICULT TO AROUSE RANK AND FILE ACTION. IN ANY CASE, CONTINUING BOURGUIBA- ACHOUR ALLIANCE WHICH DATES FROM MONASTIR PSD CRISIS, AND WHICH NO LONGER INCLUDES NOUIRA AS FAR AS ACHOUR IS CONCERNED, IS DEFINITE ASSET FOR BOURGUIBA IN HIS EFFORT HOLD

TOGETHER NATIONAL UNITY IN FACE OF OPPOSITION WITHIN PSD
BY LIBERALS" AND OUTSIDE BY STUDENTS. ACHOUR HOPED BY
CONGRESS DEMONSTRATE TO BOURGUIBA THAT UGTT IS STRONGEST
ORGANIZED FORCE OUTSIDE OF MILITARY AND FROM ALL INDICATIONS
WOULD APPEAR HE MAY HAVE SUCCEEDED. WHETHER THIS
IS CASE MAY DEPEND ON RANK AND FILE BEHAVIOR IN COMING
MONTHS AS GOT FIGHTS TO HOLD DOWN PRICES AS WELL AS LABOR
COSTS IN PUBLIC SECTOR. UGTT OBVIOUSLY ALSO IS FORCE ON
AFRICAN AND ARAB SCENE AND THIS MAY BE BEST DEMONSTRATED
BY OUTCOME OF ADDIS MEETING AND POSSIBLY UGTT' S GREATER
INVOLVEMENT IN ICATU AFFAIRS AS WELL AS ITS CONTINUED
CHAMPIONING OF PALESTINIAN CAUSE IN ICFTU, ILO AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUMS.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TUNIS01869
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730435/aaaahukw.tel
Line Count: 240
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 TUNIS 1804
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <30-Oct-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971204
Subject: UGTT CONGRESS: A TRIUMPH FOR BOURGUIBA AND ACHOUR
TAGS: ELAB, OCON, TS, OCON
To: ADDIS ABABA
AF
ALGIERS
BEIRUT
BRUSSELS
GENEVA
PARIS

SECSTATE WASHDC

TRIPOLI

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005